The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. VII. BOSTON, APRIL, 1899. No. 11

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second-class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

GEO. H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 272 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

CONTENTS OF NO. 11.

THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST 129
THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION 129
THE STILL HOUR 132
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 133
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL 136
AMUSEMENT COLUMN 139
THE BLUEBIRD 139
IMPORTANT NOTICES 140

THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST.

Rise, heart, thy Lord is risen. Sing His praise
Without delays;
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With Him may'st rise;
That, as His death calcinéd thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and, much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle, for thy part,
With all thy art;
The cross taught all wood to resound His name,
Who bore the same;
His stretchéd sinews taught all strings what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort, both heart and lute, and twist a song,
Pleasant and long;
Or, since all music is but three parts vied
And multiplied,
Oh, let thy blessed spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers to strew Thy way,
I got me boughs off many a tree;
But Thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st Thy sweets along with Thee.

The sun arising in the east,
Though he gave light and the east perfume,
If they should offer to contest
With Thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavor?
We count three hundred, but we miss:
There is but one, and that one ever.

— *George Herbert.*

THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION.

1 *Cor. xv:* 14.— "*If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain; and your faith is also vain.*"

What does the resurrection of Jesus signify? What reason have we to believe in this resurrection, and wherein consists the importance of this belief? What, precisely, do we intend by the resurrection of Jesus?

The rising of Christ from the dead does not mean, as is often taught and believed, his coming out of the grave with his earthly body and his coming back to his former earthly life. If this were the meaning, it would have no more value than the revival of Lazarus. It would be only resuscitation, not resurrection. It would involve the necessity of laying aside again the earthly body; that is, of another death. But Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over him. Hence the Church has completed the resurrection by another miracle,—the ascension. According to the church theory, Jesus returned to this world and to this life by the resurrection, and passed into the other world by the ascension.

But this view does not accord with Scripture. The New Testament lays all the stress on the resurrection of Jesus, none on the ascension. The word "ascension," as applied to Jesus, does not occur once in the New Testament; but the resurrection of Jesus is constantly emphasized. Paul says, "Christ that died, yea, rather is risen, and sitteth by the right hand of God." Resurrection means *going up*, not coming back:

it is passing up into a heavenly state. The Scripture teaches that, when we are in a heavenly state here, we have already risen with Christ. Paul says to the Christians who were yet alive, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above." He tells them that even now they are sitting in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. Jesus says, "In the resurrection [that is, in the higher life above this life] they neither marry nor are given in marriage." "The resurrection," is not then coming back to this world, but ascent into a higher world of spiritual being. When Jesus said, "I am Resurrection, and I am Life," he certainly did not mean the revival of the body. He meant that in him was the spiritual power which raised the soul to a higher state. The resurrection of Jesus does not mean his return to this life, but his spiritual ascent to a higher life.

But, on the other hand, it does not mean that he became a disembodied spirit, or what we call a ghost. His purpose, when he appeared to his disciples, was to show them that he was still a human soul in a human body, though this was not an earthly body. He desired to have them see that it was a real body, though a spiritual one. He wished them to see him as the real Jesus whom they had known,— not a vision or a phantom, but, though risen into a higher state of soul and body, the same friend whom they had known.

The *essence*, then, of the resurrection of Jesus is this: that he showed himself, after death, to his disciples, so that they were fully convinced that he was living, but living in a higher state. He remained the same to them in love, sympathy, help, as before. He was always near them. Divine power came to them through him from above. When death should come, they would be received by him into the higher state to which he had gone. Hence the fear of death was taken away, and all doubt in regard to what he told them of the presence and love of God. He had ascended to his father and their father; and yet he was with them always, even to the end of the age.

This is what I understand to be the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus. Let us next ask what reason we have to believe in its reality.

If we regard the resurrection of Jesus as a violation of law or as an event entirely exceptional and standing alone, it would be more difficult to accept it. And, no doubt, it has been so considered by the theology of the past. But, if we see in it an outward manifestation of a universal law, if we are all to rise, as Jesus rose, into a higher state of being, then his resurrection was a manifestation to his disciples of the reality of that higher state. To them it was not a miracle, but a revelation. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose, then them, also, who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him." "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." That is, while, as mortals descended from Adam we know that we shall die, as Christians, believing in Christ, we know that we shall be made alive. This was the faith of the apostles. They saw in their risen Master a revelation of a higher world, where they would be with him. He had said: "I go to prepare a place for you. And, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again to receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye shall be also." This brought heaven very near to them, and made this life and the next close to each other, with no great gulf between. "Whether we live, we live to the Master, and whether we die, we die to the Master: living or dying, therefore, we are his."

As to the fact of the reappearance of Jesus after his crucifixion, the four Gospels are unanimous. They differ as to the details, which shows that they are independent narrators, not copying from each other. But all agree as to the main fact, that the disciples saw their Master alive and knew him. This was the fourfold tradition of the early Church. To this we may add a fifth witness, and a very important one,— Paul. Matthew and Mark represent the Jewish type of Christianity. John, in his Gospel, represents a more spiritual and philosophical form. Paul gave to the world a Christianity wholly disengaged and detached from its Jewish shell. But these three types of doctrine all agree as to the reality and the importance of the resurrection of Jesus. Paul does not mention in his thirteen Epistles any other of the miracles of Jesus, but the rising of Jesus is to him a fact of essential importance. "If

Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." Paul ranked himself with the other witnesses of the resurrection because Christ had appeared to him in a vision on the way to Damascus. "Last of all he was seen by me, also," said Paul, thus showing that to him the essential fact was not the coming back from the grave, of which Paul was not a witness. The essential fact was the manifestation of Jesus as existing in a higher life. All the writers of the New Testament make Christ's reappearance a corner-stone in their faith. Peter says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, has given us a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead." The resurrection of Jesus was declared to the Jews at Jerusalem, to the Greeks at Athens, and to the Romans in the imperial city. The Christian Church has differed on a thousand questions, but on this point it has never wavered during its long history. Every Easter it testifies again to this great fact. In this, Roman Catholics and Protestants, Greeks and Armenians, all speak the same tongue.

But more than this: the very fact of the existence of the Church is a strong testimony to the reappearance. When Jesus was crucified, the hope and courage of his disciples were gone. They forsook him and fled. They give abundant evidence in their own story of their ignorance of their Master's purposes, their misunderstanding of his ideas, their want of faith in his great leadership, down to the very hour of his death. And, when he was put to death, the little faith they had disappeared. Christianity died with Jesus, and was buried in his tomb. If he had not risen, Christianity would never have appeared again on earth. But in seven weeks we find it again in full course, making 3,000 converts in one day in Jerusalem. Whence came this new zeal, this ardor of conviction, this immutable strength of purpose, to those disciples, a little while ago so feeble and so unbelieving? Every one of them gives the same answer: "Our Master has arisen, he has gone up into a higher life. He has shown himself to us, coming from that heavenly world, and returning into it again." This was the one fact of their preaching. Their only work at first was "to bear witness to his resurrection." Afterward they became able to preach the whole gospel. Their communion with their Master gave them strength of conviction, ardor of faith, and opened their souls to receive the great influence of the Holy Spirit, which led them into all truth. Their insight continually deepened, their faith grew larger and stronger; and they preached the gospel of love and hope to Greek and Barbarian, Jew and Gentile.

There is one more proof of the resurrection of Jesus. It is to be found in the new sense of immortality that followed it. Belief in immortality or in a future life has been well-nigh universal. All races have had a belief in our survival in another world. But with Christianity this belief came in a new form. It became a practical conviction, working on conduct and character in the present life. Faith in that unseen world has been the inspiration in thousands of homes. It has been the support in trial, the consolation in sorrow, the blessed hope which has comforted broken hearts. It has given strength to the missionary and the martyr. It has been with the slave on the plantation, a heavenly radiance to give him inward joy in his hard life. It has come like the angels in the tomb of Jesus, and has sat by the side of the bereaved parents as they looked on the face of their darling child. It has made the world a new world by its living hope. It has been a river of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, causing the desert to blossom as the rose with an immortal trust. It has taken away the great gulf between this world and the next, and it has made us sit already in heavenly places with Christ.

Faith in immortal life has been a great moral force, a motor power in the world, from the first Easter Sunday till now. It has abolished death, caused the future life and the present to be one continuous existence, without break or gap. It has made Jesus a present friend, a living Saviour. Men believed, and always had believed, in a future life; but the resurrection made that future life one with this. "The hour cometh, and now is," said the Master. A living faith in the future brings heaven down to earth, makes us sit in heavenly

places now, and thus the two worlds are one. The view of immortality produced by the resurrection of Jesus appears in his conversation with Martha. "I know," said she, "that my brother will rise, in the resurrection, at the last day." "I am resurrection, and I am life," he replied. "Resurrection and life are both here. He who believes in me has immortal life abiding in him, and I will raise him up at the last day." In proportion as we now have faith in the infinite love of God will be our faith in a future life. Confidence in a heavenly Father's love convinces us that we shall always belong to him, that all souls are his, and that he will not let one of us pass away out of his infinite affection. "No one shall pluck them out of my Father's hand." This is the true corner-stone of a practical faith in a future life. It is faith in a present divine love. The only argument Jesus ever used for immortality was founded on this conviction, that every soul belongs to God, and is dear to him, and that he will not suffer any to perish. He quotes to the Sadducees the saying of Moses from the bush. "I am the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." And this argument still holds true. He is still the God of all the souls whose lives have illuminated past history. They all belong to him still. He is now the God of Paul and John, of Alfred and Washington, of Dante and Milton, of Chalmers and Channing. They are alive in him. "No one can pluck them out of the Father's hand." And our own dear ones, those who have passed on out of our sight into the infinite unknown, are in the Father's hands. All souls are his. He made them for himself, developed them through the long processes of the ages, brought them on to a point where they were able to know and love him. And will he drop them now into nothingness and night? To believe in God as a Father is the sure ground of faith in immortality.

I cannot agree with those who tell us that without faith in immortal life men can live as noble lives as now. I think that without a future life our interest in the present world would dwindle. Human life, ending here, would become more insignificant and uninteresting. We should still have conscience and the sense of duty, we should still have the natural affections and sympathies, we should still have reason and judgment to guide us; but hope would largely go out of our lives, and with hope courage and energy. Faith in a continued and advancing existence, in which death makes no change or pause, has been the incitement to progress in Christian lands. It animates to new endeavor; it gives fresh encouragement in the midst of disappointment; it prevents life from becoming a burden; it renews our youth; it revives God's work in the midst of the years. And so on this Easter Sunday we can say with the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his great mercy, hath created us again unto a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days,—
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy hope! and high humility!
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have shewed them me,
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death; the jewel of the just!
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But, when the hand that locked her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under thee!
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass,
Or else remove me hence unto that hill
Where I shall need no glass.

—*Henry Vaughan.*

DARKNESS.

We are with the Marys, preparing the spices with which to embalm our buried treasures. Just as that long, silent Saturday, when the dead body of Jesus lay in the tomb, was darker than the tragical Friday, so the period that follows close upon any great grief is harder to bear than the day the sorrow came. Our treasures are entombed; and a stone, too great for us to move, is laid over the door of our sepulchre. All is dark, and God seems too far away to hear our cry. Here is darkness, indeed! But the deeper the darkness, the nearer we are to the light, though we know it not. The clouds may hide the stars: they can never extinguish them. God's voice is in the cloud, though we may not hear. But this is only a day. It may be a long one. Still, like all days, it will have its close. We fall asleep in our tears, our prayers half said, it may be. No matter. God knows.

"THE GREAT MORNING."

Thanks be to God that every night, however dark, has its morning! We wake: the light of a new day streaks the east. We go at once to the tomb, as Mary did, carrying our spices of deathless love. We wonder if there be any power strong enough to roll that stone away. But, lo! as we look, it is rolled away; and an angel voice says, "Not here, but risen." This is God's world. He owns it all, its sepulchres as well as its gardens. God's angels of comfort are a mighty host, and he knows just what ones to send to roll our stone away. The graves of our loved ones are empty now. New hopes glorified take the place of old hopes buried. It is Easter with us, the octave of our Palm Sunday. The old note of joy is not repeated; but another note is struck, an octave higher. The promise of our Palm Sunday is fulfilled, but not in the way we then hoped. Two suns rise this morning, one to quicken the earth, the other to quicken the soul. No wonder it has been called "The Great Morning." Would we could always live in the light of it; that all the experiences of our Passion Week, our season of Promise, of Purification, of Controversy, of Bargain, of Communion, of Crucifixion, of Darkness, might be lighted with the resurrection hopes of the Immortal Day!

—*Leaflets for Lent, W. P. Tilden.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The Jamaica Plain branch offers "Pax Vobiscum," Henry Drummond; "The Four Georges," Thackeray; "Practical Floriculture," Peter Henderson; "The Chess Players' Handbook," Howard Staunton. Also, any one wishing to borrow books from the Loan Library please address Miss Gill, Pond Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Mrs. Susan A. Hudson, 73 West 131st Street, New York City, New York, offers the *Century Illustrated Magazine* of 1882 complete.

The Newtonville branch offer the following books. Address Miss E. T. Hooper, 136 Austin Street, Newtonville, Mass.

Magazines.

Century, 1894–1896; *Youth's Companion*, 1895–1897, Oct. 6, 1898–Nov. 24, 1898; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1895; *Munsey*, September, 1898–January, 1899; *North American Review* for 1896; odd numbers of *Life*, odd numbers of *Our Little Ones;* ten numbers of 1896 *Outlook*.

Miscellaneous.

"An Imperative Duty," "Annie Kilburn," "A Modern Instance," Howells; "With the Immortals," "Zoroaster," F. M. Crawford; "Home Life," Mrs. Caroline A. Soule; "One Year," Frances Mary Peard; "Abraham Page, Esq."; "Ships that pass in the Night"; "Oliver Twist," Dickens; "Three Men in a Boat," Jerome K. Jerome; "The Great War Syndicate," Stockton; "The Lady of the Aroostook," W. D. Howells; "A Shakespearean Diary"; "First Principles of Chemical Philosophy"; "Letters from Armenia"; "Familiar Life in Field and Forest"; "Canada" (the Story of the Nations Series); "Meadow Grass" (tales of New England Life); Dana's "Manual of Geology"; "Social Evolution," Kidd; "The History of David Grieve"; "The Romance of the Sea"; "A Hypocritical Romance"; "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde"; "Astronomy"; "The King's Jackal"; "A Rambler's Lease"; "Pastime Stories"; "Sunrise"; "The Bachelor's Christmas"; "The Story of Cuba and her struggles for Liberty"; "Poems of Sidney Lanier"; "Stories from the Greek Comedians"; "Stories from the Greek Tragedians"; "The Forces of Nature"; "Phantastes"; "Modern Frenchmen"; "Words in Season."

Juvenile.

"Jack Hall," Robert Grant; "Willie Benton, and Other Stories"; "A Book of Science," Lydia H. Farmer; "Hospital Sketches," Louisa M. Alcott; "The Wreck of the Circus"; "On Schedule Time"; "Little Mr. Thimblefinger"; "Our Home Pets"; "Dean Stanley with the Children"; "The Nursery"; "Pictures and Stories of Natural History"; "Willie Winkie's Book"; Swinton's "Elementary Geography"; "Franklin Elementary Arithmetic"; "Franklin Written Arithmetic"; Harper's "First Book in Arithmetic"; Worcester's "Spelling Book"; Harrington's "Spelling Book"; "Music Reader"; Swinton's "Language Lessons"; "Lessons in English"; "Franklin Primer"; Appleton's "Reader" (third and second).

Also a large quantity of vocal and instrumental music.

The King's Chapel Branch offers a number of copies of "David Copperfield," by Charles Dickens; "John Halifax, Gentleman," by Miss Mulock; Whittier's "Early Poems"; and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." Apply to Miss S. N. Brown, 79 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston.

A Bible is offered by Mrs. Dexter N. Richards, 98 Colchester Street, Brookline, Mass.

The following books are offered by the Portsmouth Branch. Address Miss Lucy Sise, Court Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. "Robinson Crusoe"; "Last Days of Pompeii"; "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush"; "Vicar of Wakefield"; "Timothy's Quest"; "Sant' Ilario"; "A Life for a Life"; "Zeph," by H. H.; "The Master of Ballantrae"; "Reveries of a Bachelor"; "Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin"; Emerson's "Essays"; "Imitation of Christ"; Longfellow's "Poems"; "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table"; Russell's "School Reader"; "Histories of Tacitus"; "History of our own Times," vol. i.; "Tales of a Wayside Inn"; "A Tale of Two Cities"; "Old Curiosity

Shop"; "Oliver Twist"; "Pickwick Papers"; "Twice-told Tales"; "Wonder Book"; "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The Eastport Branch offer the following books. Address Mrs. O. B. Whalen, Eastport, Maine. Woodbury's "Eclectic German Reader"; "Progressive German Reader," Adler; "Titus, a Comrade of the Cross," Kingsley; "A Window in Thrums," Barrie; "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," Maclaren; "Norway," John L. Stoddard; "The History of Animals," Jacob Abbott; "Novelties of the New World," J. Barnard; "Worthy Women of our First Century"; *Christian Union*, 1893; *Cosmopolitan*, 1896; *The Literary Digest*, 1896; *McClure's*, 1896 (incomplete); *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1898; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1898 (incomplete).

Miss Ella M. Hall, Gouverneur, New York, offers the following: "Called Back," "Adam Bede," "Silas Marner," "Her Dearest Foe," "Helen's Babies," "Autobiography of Anthony Trollope," "The Cloister and the Hearth"; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1891–93; the *Home Magazine*, 1897; *Lend a Hand*, 1889; *Harper's Round Table*, 1896; *Harper's Young People*, 1892; *Our Youth*, 1888; *Arthur's Home Magazine*, 1885; *Century*, 1885–88; odd numbers of *Argosy*, *Munsey*, *Scribner*, *Godey*, *Outing*, *Forum*, *Popular Science Monthly*.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.)

Will any one who has German reading to send away, and who can read and write German text, kindly send her name to Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Mrs. J. B. Kline, 1618 W. 6th Avenue, Topeka, Kansas, asks for any musical journals and *Youth's Companion*.

Mrs. M. D. Burford, Naola, Amherst County, Virginia, would be grateful for *Harper's Magazine* or *Ladies' Home Journal*.

A few months ago I came out here from Massachusetts. I am a teacher, and have charge of a school of thirty-six in a community of only two hundred. We have raised a little money, and obtained twenty-five books, but would like more. It is not a reading community, but the children seem deeply interested in the books we have. Not one of them has ever read "Little Women" or any of Miss Alcott's works. I should very much like a copy of any of these or of Trowbridge's, also any numbers of *St. Nicholas* after they have been read, or any good reading for children from six to sixteen. Frances M. Curtis, Whitewater, Colorado.

I am a farmer's wife, and an ex-school teacher. Am an invalid a great deal. My husband does not believe in expending anything for reading matter; and, as my housework is very hard for me, I have no means of earning. Will some of the kind friends send me some reading, magazines or books, for which I would be very grateful? Mrs. Jessie Rossmiller, Otter Tail County, Luce, Minnesota.

Mrs. Alice Adkisson, box 37, Hutto, Texas, will be greatly pleased for something to read in the form of books, magazines, natural history, scientific works, books on poultry and hog-raising, and something to amuse small children (ages one and three years, boys).

Mr. C. E. Goss, Edith, Coke County, Texas, would be glad to receive the "Life of P. T. Barnum" and anything pertaining to gymnastics.

Mrs. P. B. Rucker, Forks of Buffalo, Virginia, asks for any of Cooper's works.

Nelly Collins, Epperson, Tennessee, a young girl of seventeen, would like suitable reading and a correspondent.

Will some one send "A Fair God" to Mr. C. C. Wright, Straw, North Carolina, who asks for it for an invalid lady?

Mrs. J. H. Turner, Fair Bluff, North Carolina, mother of six children, will be glad of reading for herself or children.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.

It has been deeply said that pain is the secret of nature. I have that within me which responds to it. I must feel it for others as well as for myself, and shall constantly do so when my faith is perfected. I am grateful that I exist; for I can look upon what we call *this life* as only the beginning of a long career, in which I shall ever look back and rejoice that I have been a human being, whatever may be the ills that I suffer from just now. The consciousness of the capacities of expanding intellect and of glorious affections assure me that the destiny of the soul will compensate for the heritage of woe which this life is to many of us. Thus I try to look beyond the conflicts I see in the future of these little beings who now dance joyfully around me.

You will wonder, perhaps, that one can conceive such a personal interest in the children of others; but it will come to you in time. You have truly said that it needs all the tenderness of a mother, and her vital self-forgetting interest in the result, to enable her to find the true path of nature from the beginning, and remove all obstacles to free unfolding. But many a mother sacrifices her elder children, as it were, to this discovery. As the germ of the maternal sentiment is in all women, relations may be established between teacher and child that may take the place of the natural one, so far as to answer all the purposes required. Such a relation is the only foundation upon which a true education can go on. It leaves no room for a division of interests between child and teacher, which division alone has the power forever to destroy all the best benefits of the communication of mind, and is generally, indeed, an effectual barrier against any *communication* at all. Such a relation as I would have does away with every feeling of reserve that might check the full and free expression of thought and feeling. A young child should turn to its teacher, as well as to its mother, with the undoubting confidence that *there* is a wealth of love equal to all occasions. When my little scholars call me "mother," which they often do from inadvertence, I feel most that I am in the true relation to them. I have in some instances been preferred before the mother, because I was the fountain of knowledge and even of tenderness to starved and neglected little souls.

A very sensitive child of seven years old, who always said "can't," when any task, even the simplest, was set before her, but who was, nevertheless, so morbidly conscientious that she was miserable not to be able to accomplish anything that she thought her duty, took an opportunity one day, when she was alone with me, to make me the confidant of her domestic sorrows, asking me to promise I would not tell "mother." This was rather dangerous ground; but I knew something of the domestic life of the family, and that the tender mother of it was often exasperated almost to madness by the cruel tyranny and exactions of the father, and I promised. Then, with burning cheeks and trembling voice, she told me that they did not love her at home, that her father despised her, that her mother urged her, beyond her strength, to meet his requirements, that her eldest sister treated her with harshness and ridicule because she was "stupid," and that her younger sisters did not like to play with her because she was cross. I saw at a glance why she always said and felt "can't," and I stood awe-struck before the endowment of conscience in the child which had stood the test of such trials as these, and made duty the central point of her being; for that I had already known to be the case. I sympathized with her, as you may well imagine. I told her what I knew of the virtues of her mother, whom she tenderly loved, and whose love for herself she felt, but could not enjoy, because its natural expression was lost in the impatient endeavor to hold her up to her father's unreasonable requisitions. From that hour she was my child, and could work happily in my presence. I told her that I knew she always wished to do right, and that I should always be satisfied with whatever she could accomplish, that, if I required too much of her, she only need to say so, that she must not try to do anything more than was pleasant and comfortable; for only thus could she preserve her powers of mind, which were good, and

which would work well if they could work happily. Through my influence she passed much time away from her ungenial home, with friends in whose society she could be happy and unrestrained, and the burden was lightened so far that she was in the end able to justify herself, and take a happier place in the family circle; but she was irretrievably injured both mentally and morally, learning to become indifferent where she could not assert herself, and the battle of life will, I fear, ever be a hard one to her.

In such cases one feels the true spirit of adoption, and this should be the standard for the general relation. I do not feel satisfied till the most timid and reserved are confiding to me, smile when they meet my eye, and come to me in the hour of trouble; nor till the most perverse and reckless take my reproofs in sorrow, and not in anger, and return to me for sympathy when they are good.

—*From "Moral Culture of Infancy,"*

Mrs. Horace Mann.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING,—HOW NOT TO DO IT.

Mrs. Wakeman's Method.

Mrs. Wakeman had seven scholars in her class. Five of them wrote compositions on "the storm at sea"; and four brought what they had written to the school, and gave the papers to the teacher. Another, a young girl named Lucy Ray, brought her paper to the school; but she was afraid to offer it to the teacher, and so kept it in her pocket, intending to wait and see how the others succeeded with theirs before offering hers. Another girl wrote a composition, but left it at home. And the seventh did not write at all.

Mrs. Wakeman took the four compositions into her hand; and, then looking around upon her class with a somewhat troubled expression of countenance,— which, however, was an expression of sorrow, not of anger,— she said: —

"Only four compositions out of a class of seven. I thought that all of you would write. I am sorry to find that nearly half of my class fail in performing their duty. I hope the next time you will all be prepared."

Then she began to open the first paper, saying, as she did so: —

"Now I am going to read these compositions to you, and tell you what the faults in them are. Of course, I don't expect you can write very good compositions yet. You are just beginning, and there will be a great many faults and mistakes. But I will point out all the faults and mistakes to you, and then you will avoid them next time."

The children all began to look uneasy and uncomfortable. Mrs. Wakeman had, by this time, opened one of the papers; and the first thing that attracted her attention was a blot on the sheet near the lower right-hand corner.

"Ah! Mary," said Mrs. Wakeman,—for this composition was the work of one of the scholars named Mary Allen,—"you have got a blot on your paper; though, I suppose, it was an accident. But you must all be very careful not to get blots on your papers, when you write. It spoils the looks of the whole page."

So Mrs. Wakeman held up the sheet to the class, in order that they might see how a blot on the paper spoiled the looks of the whole page. Poor Mary hung her head and looked very much distressed.

It was with great difficulty that Mrs. Allen could succeed in persuading Mary to carry her composition to school. She finally consented to do so, but she did it with fear and trembling; and, when Mrs. Wakeman held up the sheet to display the blot to the view of the whole class, her heart sank within her, and she resolved that, if she could help it, she would never try to write another composition as long as she lived.

Mrs. Wakeman then proceeded to read the composition aloud. She stopped at every two or three lines, as she read, to mention and point out the faults of spelling, punctuation, and capitals, and to make other such criticisms. When she finished reading it, she folded it up again and gave it to Mary, saying that, on the whole, it was very well, and that she ought to feel encouraged.

Perceiving, however, that Mary looked somewhat troubled, she added: —

"You must not be troubled, Mary, at there being so many faults. You can't ex-

pect to write correctly at first; but you will improve, and in time you will make a very good writer, I am sure."

Mary took the composition and put it in her pocket without saying a word; but, as Mrs. Wakeman saw that her eyes were filling with tears, she immediately opened another of the papers, in hopes, by reading the composition of one of the other scholars, to divert Mary's attention from her own.

She pursued the same plan in respect to the second composition which she had adopted with the first, pointing out very particularly, and marking with a pencil, all the faults, errors, and mistakes that she could find. She was very particular not to let one escape. If she had overlooked a single one, she would have considered herself as so far failing in accuracy and thoroughness as a teacher.

When she had finished her reading and her criticisms, she gave the paper to the writer of it, recommending to her to read it all over carefully when she went home, and observe attentively all the marks, so as to avoid making such mistakes and errors the next time.

The girl took the paper and put it in her pocket, and, when it was once in, out of sight, she crushed it with her hand as if she owed it a spite, and jammed it down as far as possible into the bottom of her pocket; and then as soon as she got home, after the school was closed, she put it, all crumpled up as it was, into the kitchen fire.

The next paper which Mrs. Wakeman opened contained only a few lines, not enough to reach more than half-way down the page. This exercise was written by a girl who had never attempted composition before, and it had cost her so much time and labor to produce these few lines that by the time she had finished them she was tired out in mind and body. She had great doubts about bringing so short an exercise to school and offering it in the class; but she did not like to lose all her labor, and so she finally concluded to run the risk of presenting it. "This is yours, Maria, I believe," said Mrs. Wakeman, when she opened it. "But it is very short. Could not you write a longer one? Why did you not write more?"

"I could not think of anything else to say," replied Maria.

"Oh, you did not think long enough," said Mrs. Wakeman. "You ought not to have given up so soon. You must have more perseverance. We never can get along well in the world or succeed in anything we undertake unless we have perseverance." She then proceeded to read the composition, pointing out, as she did so, all the errors and mistakes, as she had done in the case of all the others. While she was doing it, Lucy Ray felt in her pocket to make sure that her composition was still there; and, pushing it down as far as she could, she put her handkerchief over it and crowded it in all around, as if to prevent the possibility of its getting out in any way.

Mrs. Wakeman read the fourth composition, and commented upon it just as she had done in the case of the others. In all, she was careful, first, not to let any fault or error escape her; and, second, to point out the faults in as kind and gentle a manner as possible, and to be especially careful not to say anything to hurt the feelings of her scholars. She imagined that this was the proper way to lead her pupils to interest themselves in making improvement in the art of writing compositions.

But suppose she had been treated in the same way herself in respect to her own failures and shortcomings. She was a young wife, having been married only a few months. She had commenced housekeeping only a short time before; and, like all young housekeepers, she necessarily made a great many mistakes, and met with a great many failures. Her errors and mistakes in her housekeeping and in her other duties as a wife were at least as many, in proportion, as those of her scholars in their compositions. Now suppose that her husband had come and taken a seat by her side on the sofa on Saturday evening, when the week was ended, and had said to her in a kind and affectionate manner: —

"Now, my dear, I know you wish to improve as a wife and as a housekeeper; and, in order to help you, I have been observing during this week all your errors, failures, and shortcomings, and have remembered them all, and now I am going to tell you what they all are, so that you may avoid them next week, and thus more rapidly improve." And then suppose he were to go on to criticise all her conduct and her management, and point out every fault and failing

he had observed. Would this be the way to lead her on to improvement in the performance of her duties?

—"*Mary Osborne*," *Jacob Abbott.*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.*]

Charades.

1.

Simple Simon met a pedler,
Trying to sell his ware.
My *first* he sold, my *all* to fix.
My *second's* e'er in fair.

My *third*, wherever it is placed,
Is always more than three.
My *all* is worn by children small,
As all who look may see.

From Sphinx Lore.

2.

My *first* is fresh and fair, and comes but once a year.
My *second* is an ugly beast, whom no one loves, I fear.
My *third* and *fourth* you'll find are anything you please.
My *whole* is a material, and has to do with trees.

Nonsense Numbers.

1. What whole number is reduced to nothing by adding to it.

2. Take five from five, and naught prefix,
Result rebukes lad's naughty tricks.

3. One half of ten, one less than ten,
Two-thirds of ten combine.
A nagging scold the letters pen,
When side by side in line.

4. From twenty, please, one-half subtract,
Put half a dozen in its place,
Still twenty will be seen: the fact
Is just as plain as nose on face.

5. A number odd, if you behead,
At once will even be instead.
Of tail deprived, if then it be,
Our mother's name you'll plainly see.
Repeat these processes again,
A number odd will yet remain.

— *From the "Queen."*

Beheadings.

1. Behead to look over, and leave a receptacle.

Behead again, and leave an article.

2. Behead a very little thing, which often causes much damage, and leave one of the rural beauties of a city.

Behead again, and leave the home of man and beast.

3. Behead a part of a wave, and leave what remains.

Answers to Puzzles in March Number.

Enigma.

Old shoe.

Conundrums.

1. Because they make people *good for nothing.*
2. No. They do write.
3. It contains many blades.
4. Because he casts reflections.

Charades.

1. Cowhide.
2. Bluebeard.
3. Firelight.

Transpositions.

1. Simon Peter in tears.
2. Wings on hat.

THE BLUEBIRD.

The bluebird is the color-bearer of the spring brigade, even as the song-sparrow is the bugler. There may be snow on the ground, and the chimney nightly tells the complaint of the wind. All other signs fail; but, when we see the bluebird in his azure robe and hear his liquid notes (he is April's minstrel), we know that spring is close at hand, for in winter the blue coat is veiled with rusty brown, as if the murky storms had cast their shadows upon it. The bluebird's note is pleasing and mellow. Uttered close at hand, as when the birds go to and fro about their nests, it sounds as if the domestic arrangements were being discussed with the subdued, melancholy voice so often assumed by unwilling housewives. Then the male will fly off on a marketing expedition, murmuring to himself, "Dear, dear,

think of it, *think* of it!" In fact, these birds seem to be practical, every-day little creatures, and very seldom show any tokens of affection after the nesting season begins.

Yet the bluebird is one to whom romance strongly attaches us. Its notes recall the first thrill of early spring, and we cannot disassociate him from blooming orchards. In the autumn he is one of the latest to call to us, the last leaf (so to speak) on the tree of beautifully colored song-birds.

John Burroughs says of the bluebird, "When Nature made the bluebird, she wished to propitiate both the sky and the earth, so she gave him the color of one on his back and the hue of the other on his breast, and ordained that his appearance in spring should denote that the strife and war between these two elements was at an end. He is the peace-harbinger: in him the celestial and terrestrial strike hands and are fast friends."

— "*Birdcraft*," *Mabel Osgood Wright.*

Will any one (living in a town where there is no free library and where books are desired) who is willing to take charge of a temporary library send her name to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.?

Mrs. Evalie Meek has unexpectedly returned to Linwood, Indian Territory.

We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word.— *R. W. Emerson.*

Let not future things disturb thee; for thou wilt come to them, if it shall be necessary, having with thee the same reason which thou now usest for present things.— *Marcus Antoninus.*

The reward of one duty is the power to fulfil another.— *George Eliot.*

I would give nothing for that man's religion whose very dog and cat are not the better for it.—*Rowland Hill.*

Does any man wound thee? Not only forgive but work into thy thought intelligence of the kind of pain, that thou mayest never *inflict* it on another spirit.— *Margaret Fuller.*

The greater our conception of God, the greater will be our own life.— *W. Dale.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, April 7, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE —Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.